

THIS REPORT CONTAINS ASSESSMENTS OF COMMODITY AND TRADE ISSUES MADE BY USDA STAFF AND NOT NECESSARILY STATEMENTS OF OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT POLICY

Voluntary Public

Date: 11/24/2014

GAIN Report Number: TR4046

Turkey

Post: Ankara

Exports to Turkey Disrupted by New Biotech Enzyme Requirement

Report Categories:

Biotechnology - GE Plants and Animals

Agricultural Situation

Approved By:

Kimberly S. Sawatzki, Agricultural Counselor

Prepared By:

Jess K. Paulson, Agricultural Attaché

Report Highlights:

Post learned Friday, November 22, 2014, that Turkish officials now require an official attestation that imports utilizing enzymes or microorganisms are free from genetically engineered enzymes or microorganisms. The attestation must be provided by the government of the producer or exporter's government.

General Information:

Post learned Friday, November 22, 2014, that Turkish officials now require an official attestation that imports utilizing enzymes or microorganisms are free from genetically engineered enzymes or microorganisms. The attestation must be provided by the government of the producer or exporter's government.

Post met with Turkey's Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MinFAL) on November 22, 2014, to clarify the implementation of this requirement. MinFAL was unable to clarify what wording required in the attestation from the foreign government. For example, MinFAL could not clarify if the statement should state that genetically engineered enzymes were not used in the processing of the product, or that the product does not contain genetically engineered enzymes. Nor could MinFAL define the scope of products for which an attestation would be required. However, it is clear that the requirement applies to the import of enzymes, microorganisms, and products that utilize them in their production.

Post is aware of shipments that are currently not being permitted entry into Turkey due to the new requirement to include enzymes in their list of ingredients. MinFAL suggested that import officials may also require a government attestation for products "known" to utilize enzymes or microorganisms. The lack of clear guidance from MinFAL means implementation at the ports will likely be inconsistent.

As there is no testing methodology to determine if an enzyme or microorganism is derived from genetic engineering, and the U.S. government does not have a system in place to confirm the use or non-use of genetically engineered enzymes, it is currently uncertain if a U.S. certifying authority could provide the required attestation. Post understands that a number of trading partners are similarly unable to provide the attestation that Turkey requires. As the requirement applies to all products except pharmaceuticals and cosmetics as defined in the scope of Turkey's Biosafety Law, it potentially prevents the import of more than just food and feed products in Turkey.

The requirement that a government issue the attestation was implemented in late October 2014, replacing a statement from producers or exporters. Reportedly, Turkish officials will not provide any derogation for products that shipped before late October. The government attestation requirement was neither announced, nor notified to the World Trade Organization or to trade partners.

Post will continue to seek clarity on the scope and application of this requirement. If you have specific questions about the trade of U.S. agricultural products into Turkey and how this requirement may affect your ability to place your product on the Turkish market, please direct your questions to

AgAnkara@fas.usda.gov.